

# WELCOME TO VCE ENGLISH FOR 2011

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VCE English at Mentone Grammar in 2011 will focus your skills in exploring texts and responding to texts. You will read and respond to various texts throughout the year, two of your texts will also be used as part of a context in which you will further develop your creative writing skills.

There are three areas of study, the first, **Area of Study One**, is '**Reading and Responding**' and the texts for Area of Study 1 will be '*The Year of Wonders*' by Geraldine Brooks ( in unit 3) and the film text '*On The Waterfront*' (in unit 4). The key skills for this area of study require you to develop analytical skills that will be used to show how a text constructs meaning, conveys ideas and values and is open to a range of different interpretations.

The second Area of Study is '**Creating and Presenting**' and this is taught through a Context. The Context chosen at Mentone Grammar in 2010 is '**Whose Reality?**' and the texts chosen for this are the Australian novel '*The Shark Net*' by Robert Drewe ( in unit 3) and '*A Streetcar Named Desire*' by Tennessee Williams ( in unit four) . You will also supplement your understanding of this context with a variety of other short texts and poems. You will be required to complete one sustained response in order to demonstrate the outcome, discussing the ideas and arguments suggested in the Context. This writing should be for a specific audience and purpose. You must write a written explanation of your intentions when completing this area of study.

The third area of study is '**Using Language to Persuade**'. For this area of study you will be required to be able to analyse and use a range of persuasive language techniques through a current issue in the Australian media. You will need to write a thorough analysis of this issue as presented in selected media texts as well as writing a sustained and reasoned point of view on the selected issue.

## Skills and Knowledge

You will need to further develop the skills that you have used in VCE English Units 1 and 2 in order to successfully complete Units 3 and 4 and gain a study score at the end of the year.

The main things that you will need to focus on will be the following:

- An ability to explore texts in depth
- An ability to comment on the ways that texts have been constructed
- An understanding of the ways that texts present their main ideas and concerns to the reader
- An understanding of the purpose and audience of texts and the ways in which these affect meaning
- An ability to write about the texts in detail through well ordered and clear essays
- An ability to work independently and to undertake independent reading and research
- An ability to participate in class discussions
- An ability to justify your ideas
- Good note taking skills
- Good oral presentation skills

- Maintaining a well organised workbook
- Adherence to deadlines
- Good organisational skills
- An ability to understand implicit and explicit values in texts
- An understanding of theme, character, plot and setting in narrative
- A good understanding of persuasive techniques and their influence on an audience

## **Holiday Homework.**

You will be given homework to do over the holiday period. This is a requirement of the course and will be used as part of your assessment. It is vital that you complete this work.

Over the summer period in 2010-11 your holiday homework is included here.

Your holiday homework will be due in the first week of term one. It is an expectation that this will be completed. Failure to submit this work will result in lunchtime and/or after school detentions until the work is completed.

## **Organisation.**

It is crucial that you organise yourself early in the year and remain organised. This means that you come to every class prepared to work with the correct equipment. This includes a dictionary and the relevant text as well as a folder or exercise book. You need to organise your time so that you can effectively complete all class and home work. If you work, you may need to cut back hours in year 12. One important thing you need to do is independent study. Read widely and often. Reading about a text or an issue you are studying from various sources really deepens your understanding. You should keep notes on the reading and discussions that you do, whether they are in class or at home, this is still valuable learning. You should participate in class discussions as much as possible, not just sit back and take it all in.

One very important tool in your organisation should be the study design. You should familiarise yourself with the study design for English and look carefully at the outcomes for each unit. There is a list of skills and knowledge required for each outcome, make sure that you work towards these. Make sure that you understand the way that Mentone Grammar is teaching you to meet these outcomes. It is vital that you take control of your own learning and this will help you to do this. You can find this at the following web page. <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/english/index.html>

## Help.

Your teachers are committed to helping you succeed in year 12. If you need help your first port of call should be your teacher. Whether it is help with understanding something in a text, help with writing something, or help with organisation, the earlier you ask the better. Don't think that you can't get help. If you want to ask another English teacher for help, maybe because your teacher is not available at the time, you are free to do so, that teacher will then discuss with your teacher what help they have given and they will work as a team to support you.

***Most of all – put the time in early in the year to understand what it is that you have to achieve and how you are best going to do this. Ask for assistance or clarification whenever you don't understand something and take charge of the year early. It is not good to begin studying hard in the last few weeks of unit 4. You need to start NOW.***

## Holiday Homework: VCE English Unit 3

### Issues Tasks (Area of Study 3):

You need to read a selection of newspaper and magazine articles that use persuasive language. You may find these online as well. You must select 6 articles to analyse in depth. Include the following information in your analyses,

*What is the issue?*

*Who is the intended audience?*

*What persuasive language is most notable in this piece?*

*What is the tone and type of language used?*

*Are there any appeals in the piece, if so what are they?*

*Does it form a coherent and well constructed argument? (make sure here that you write about the argument, not what you thought of it, you need to be objective)*

These analyses need to be kept in an Issues portfolio which you **will submit to your teacher in the first week of classes next year**. Be sure to include the articles with your analyses so that your teacher knows what you are referring to.

**Text Tasks(Area of Study 1):** Your other task is **to read the texts** that we are studying this year. While you are doing this you are to keep the following information in a text response folder.

**Characters** – who are the main characters and what are they like? List words to describe their personalities and physical characteristics, these words should come from the text wherever possible

**Setting**-What is the setting of the text like? This may change as the story develops and characters move from place to place. Setting is important as it tells us important things about characters and their motivations. Is it set in modern times, or has it a particular historical setting? What is the world like that the characters inhabit?

**Style of narrative** – Is the story narrated, if so who is the narrator? Is it a first person narrative e.g. is the narrator the main character? Are there many narrators? How does this affect the story?

**What are the key events and/or crisis points in the narrative?** –How is the plot arranged and why? Take notes as you read about the main events that occur in the plot. This will give you a good understanding of the overall concerns of the text.

**What symbols are used in the text?**- are there any images and themes that recur throughout the text? If so what do they mean?

**Key Values**-What values underpin the text? Do you think that the writer is trying to make a point about some political, social or cultural issue or value? How and why do you think this?

**These should just be dot points in a reading journal or folder and will give you a good overall understanding. You should be prepared to discuss these in class.**